



**Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections
Testimony Senate Bill 222/AB 305
October 13, 2011**

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections about Senate Bill 222 (SB 222).

SB 222 allows the Department of Transportation (DOT) to issue permits for trucks with six or more axels up to 90,000 pounds carrying sealed containers for international delivery.

The recently-completed Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study indicated there are considerable benefits to allowing 90,000 pound trucks with six axels to operate on Wisconsin highways. The study reveals semi trucks carrying 90,000 with six axels deliver the same volume of goods faster, using less fuel and fewer trips. In addition, six-axel trucks distribute weight with less impact on road surfaces than the standard five axle 80,000 pound trucks. SB 222 will reduce the number of trucks on the road and reduce wear and tear on highways.

SB 222 removes the requirement in statutes for the DOT to prepare a report, containing specified information, relating to the bill because DOT recently completed the Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study providing information that would be contained in a report.

Several other states, including some neighboring states permit the six axel, 90,000 pound combination. Wisconsin business selling their products on the international market are at a disadvantage. This bill will allow Wisconsin businesses a level playing field and will keep jobs and businesses in Wisconsin.





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MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Committee on Transportation and Elections

FROM: Douglas Parrott, Legislative Associate

DATE: October 13, 2011

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 222 and Senate Bill 223 (SB 222 and SB 223)

The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) knows the ability to move freight as efficiently as possible throughout Wisconsin is important to the state's economy. WCA understands the need for Wisconsin's businesses to be able to compete nationally as well as globally.

The WCA platform has a position opposing increasing allowable truck weights on county roads. However, WCA recognizes that it is a matter of when not if allowable weights on Wisconsin roads will be increased. While we oppose SB 222 and SB 223 as currently written, it is our hope the bills could be improved by adding several provisions.

WCA acknowledges the *Wisconsin Truck Size and Weight Study* concluded that trucks carrying 90,000 pounds on six axles causes less impact than a truck carrying 80,000 pounds on five axles. Many local bridges throughout the state unfortunately cannot handle the current allowable weights and are in no condition to handle increased weights. WCA believes that if allowable truck weights will be increased on state and local roads then a priority route analysis needs to be performed to identify what infrastructure on those routes needs to be upgraded.

Once those local bridges and roads are identified it is imperative to upgrade them as quickly as possible to be able to fully utilize the priority routes. WCA believes that a funding source be included in SB 222 and SB 223 to help begin funding those projects. Absent the ability to improve local bridges and deficient roads, counties will be forced to post those roads and bridges and restrict access to avoid a potential dangerous situation. This is a scenario that benefits no one.

While WCA opposes SB 222 and SB 223 as currently written, we believe the bills can be improved to a point that lessens the impact on county infrastructure. WCA appreciates Chairperson Lazich and the Department of Transportation asking WCA for input on this issue and we look forward to continuing to work with the DOT on addressing the issue of improving the local infrastructure and identifying priority routes. WCA will be attending the Governor's Freight Summit in November and intends to be a part of the solution to these issues.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.